

PRATHAM BOOKS
A Book in Every Child's Hand

Level 4

Arya in the Cockpit

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Arya always wanted to fly.



When she was four years old, she wanted to be Rosamma.

Arya saw her at the circus. Rosamma was a trapeze artist.

Arya wanted to fly in the air from swing to swing. Her clothes would glitter like Rosamma’s. Hundreds of people would clap for her.

She would eat cotton candy every day. Her best friend would be a clown.

Trapeze artists climb a tall ladder, stand on a narrow board, hold the fly bar, and swing! Another trapeze artist is usually waiting to catch them on the other side.



When Arya was eight years old she wanted to be Kalpana Chawla.

She made herself an orange space suit. She wore it day and night.

"Arya, aren’t you feeling hot in that suit?"

"Astronauts have to get used to the suit, Amma. Space is not as safe as Earth is. My suit will protect me."

Kalpana Chawla grew up in Haryana, India.
As an astronaut, Kalpana flew around the earth 252 times!
Kalpana died doing her job when the spacecraft
she was inside broke apart while returning to Earth.



When Arya was twelve years old, she wanted to be Amelia Earhart.

She built a model plane for her school project. It couldn’t fly, but she still got the second prize.

Arya even got a haircut like Amelia!

Amelia was the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean alone.
Amelia's dream was to fly around the world along the equator.
She took off on her dream flight but went
missing somewhere above the Pacific.



Soon, Arya heard of Angulia Bai, Kumudammal and Sarla Thakral, the first Indian women to fly a plane.

Angulia Bai was just sixteen years old!

"I can’t wait till I’m a teenager!"
"So you can drive?"
"No."
"So you can vote?"
"No."
"Then what?"
"So I can fly."

On 30 May, 1935, nineteen-year-old Kummudammal and sixteen-year-old Angulia Bai became the first women to obtain the 'A' pilot licence in India. They trained at the Madras Flying Club.



When Arya was eighteen years old, she wanted to become a fighter pilot.

"Who are they, Chechi?" asked her little brother Raju, seeing a poster on her wall.

"They are Bhawana, Avani and Mohana, the first women to fly fighter planes in India."

"Are they your friends?"

Arya laughed. "Maybe some day, Raju..."

Mohana, Bhawana and Avani are fighter pilots. Before them, only men were allowed to become fighter pilots in India. They protect the country's borders from high up in the air. During disasters like floods and earthquakes, they take part in rescue missions.



Arya saved up money to attend flying school.

She spent years studying. She sat along with pilots to learn from them. She worked hard and ate a lot of carrots! Amma always said carrots are great for the eyes.



Finally, she is ready to sit at the cockpit herself.

Today is a special day for Arya. That’s her in the cockpit. She’s very excited because there are two special passengers on her plane this morning.



"Ladies and gentlemen, this is your Captain, Arya. Welcome aboard!"

"Chechi!"
"That’s my daughter!"

Click here to read Raju's version of the story.

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Arya in the Cockpit
(English)

Arya has always dreamt of flying. Fasten your seatbelts as she gets ready for a very special flight journey.

This is a Level 4 book for children who can read fluently and with confidence.